

Overview

Useful For

Aiding in the diagnosis of *Bartonella* infection

Testing Algorithm

For more information see [Infective Endocarditis: Diagnostic Testing for Identification of Microbiological Etiology](#).

Special Instructions

- [Infective Endocarditis: Diagnostic Testing for Identification of Microbiological Etiology](#)

Method Name

Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)

NY State Available

Yes

Specimen

Specimen Type

Varies

Ordering Guidance

If this test result is negative and there is a strong suspicion of disease caused by these organisms, consider BART / *Bartonella* Antibody Panel, IgG and IgM, Serum and Warthin-Starry tissue stain (PATHC / Pathology Consultation) testing.

Necessary Information

Specimen source is required.

Specimen Required

The high sensitivity of amplification by polymerase chain reaction requires the specimen to be processed in an environment in which contamination of the specimen by *Bartonella* species DNA is unlikely.

Submit only 1 of the following specimens:

**Specimen Type:** Fresh tissue or biopsy

**Sources:** Heart valve, liver, lymph node, spleen, or skin tissue papule/lesion/nodule

**Container/Tube:** Sterile container

**Specimen Volume:** Entire collection or 5 mm(3) - approximately the size of a pencil eraser

**Collection Instructions:**

1. Collect fresh tissue specimen.

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2. Submit tissue only, do not add fluid to tissue.

3. Refrigerate or freeze specimen.

**Specimen Stability Information:** Refrigerated (preferred) <7 days/ Frozen <7 days

**Preferred Paraffin-embedded tissue block:**

**Specimen Type:** Formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tissue block (FFPE)

**Sources:** Heart valve, liver, lymph node, spleen, or skin tissue papule/lesion/nodule

**Supplies:** Tissue Block Container (T553)

**Container/Tube:** Tissue block

**Collection Instructions:** Submit a formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tissue block to be cut and returned.

**Specimen Stability Information:** Ambient (preferred)/Refrigerated

**Acceptable: Paraffin-embedded tissue block:**

**Specimen Type:** Formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tissue block (FFPE)

**Sources:** Heart valve, liver, lymph node, spleen, or skin tissue papule/lesion/nodule

**Container/Tube:** Sterile container for each individual cut section (scroll).

**Collection Instructions:** Perform microtomy and prepare five separate 10-micron sections. **Each section (scroll) must be placed in a separate sterile container for submission.**

**Specimen Stability Information:** Ambient (preferred)/Refrigerated

**Specimen Type:** Fluid

**Sources:** Cerebrospinal or ocular (eg, vitreous humor fluid)

**Container/Tube:** Sterile vial

**Specimen Volume:** 0.5 mL

**Specimen Stability Information:** Refrigerated (preferred) <7 days/Frozen <7 days

**Collection Instructions:** For CSF, submit specimen from collection vial 2.

**Specimen Type:** Synovial fluid

**Container/Tube:**

**Preferred:** Lavender top (EDTA)

**Acceptable:** Pink top (EDTA), royal blue top (EDTA), sterile vial containing EDTA-derived aliquot, red clot tube (no anticoagulant), or sterile container

**Specimen Volume:** 0.5 mL

**Collection Instructions:** Send specimen in original tube (preferred).

**Specimen Stability Information:** Refrigerated (preferred) <7 days /Frozen <7 days

**Forms**

If not ordering electronically, complete, print, and send a [Microbiology Test Request](#) (T244) with the specimen.

**Specimen Minimum Volume**

Fresh tissue or biopsy: 5 mm(3)

Paraffin-embedded tissue block: two 10-micron sections

Fluid: See Specimen Required

**Reject Due To**

Tissue in formalin, formaldehyde, or acetone Bone marrow Slides	Reject
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Specimen Stability Information

Specimen Type	Temperature	Time	Special Container
Varies	Varies		

Clinical & Interpretive

Clinical Information

*Bartonella henselae* and *Bartonella quintana* are small, pleomorphic Gram stain-negative bacilli that are difficult to isolate by culture due to their fastidious growth requirements. *B. henselae* has been associated with cat scratch disease, bacillary angiomatosis, peliosis hepatitis, and endocarditis. *B. quintana* has been associated with trench fever, bacillary angiomatosis, and endocarditis.

The diagnosis of *Bartonella* infection has traditionally been made by Warthin-Starry staining of infected tissue or serology. However, these methods may be falsely negative or nonspecific, respectively. Culture is insensitive.

Evaluation of infected tissue using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) has been shown to be an effective tool for diagnosing *Bartonella* infection. Mayo Clinic Laboratories has developed a real-time PCR test that permits rapid identification of *Bartonella* species. The assay targets a unique sequence of the citrate synthase gene present in *Bartonella* species.

Reference Values

Not applicable

Interpretation

A positive result indicates the presence of *Bartonella* species DNA.

A negative result indicates the absence of detectable *Bartonella* DNA but does not negate the presence of the organism and may occur due to inhibition of the polymerase chain reaction, sequence variability underlying primers or probes, or the presence of *Bartonella* DNA in quantities less than the limit of detection of the assay.

Cautions

This test does not differentiate between *Bartonella henselae* and *Bartonella quintana*.

Test results should be used as an aid in diagnosis. The single assay should not be used as the only criteria to form a clinical conclusion, but results should be correlated with patient symptoms and clinical presentation. A negative result does not negate the presence of the organism or active disease.

Inhibition of less than 2% has been noted in formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded tissues. In a study of 178 ocular fluids, no inhibition was detected, although this is a possibility due to the relatively small number of specimens tested.

**Clinical Reference**

1. Liesman RM, Pritt BS, Maleszewski JJ, Patel R: Laboratory diagnosis of infective endocarditis. J Clin Microbiol. 2017 Sep;55(9):2599-2608. doi: 10.1128/jcm.00635-17

2. Dumler JS, Carroll KC, Patel R: Bartonella. In: Carroll K, Pfaller M, eds. Manual of Clinical Microbiology. 12th ed. ASM Press; 2019:chap 50

**Performance****Method Description**

Bacterial nucleic acid is extracted from the specimen using the automated MagNA Pure instrument. The purified DNA is placed on the LightCycler instrument, which amplifies and monitors by fluorescence the development of target nucleic sequences after each polymerase chain reaction (PCR) cycle. A specific target sequence from *Bartonella* species is amplified and the resulting segment is detected using specific hybridization probes. Detection of the *Bartonella* target is performed through melting curve analysis using the LightCycler software.(Cockerill FR, Uhl JR: Applications and challenges of real-time PCR for the clinical microbiology laboratory. In: Reischl U, Wittwer C, Cockerill F, eds. Rapid Cycle Real-Time PCR Methods and Applications. Springer-Verlag; 2002:3-27; Dumler JS, Carroll KC, Patel R: Bartonella. In: Carroll KC, Pfaller M, eds. Manual of Clinical Microbiology. 12th ed. ASM Press; 2019:893-904)

**PDF Report**

No

**Day(s) Performed**

Monday through Friday

**Report Available**

2 to 7 days

**Specimen Retention Time**

1 week

**Performing Laboratory Location**

Mayo Clinic Laboratories - Rochester Main Campus

**Fees & Codes****Fees**

- Authorized users can sign in to [Test Prices](#) for detailed fee information.
- Clients without access to Test Prices can contact [Customer Service](#) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Prospective clients should contact their account representative. For assistance, contact [Customer Service](#).

Test Classification

This test was developed and its performance characteristics determined by Mayo Clinic in a manner consistent with CLIA requirements. It has not been cleared or approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

CPT Code Information

87801

LOINC® Information

Test ID	Test Order Name	Order LOINC® Value
BARRP	Bartonella PCR	48864-3

Result ID	Test Result Name	Result LOINC® Value
SRC51	Specimen source	31208-2
84440	Bartonella PCR	48864-3